

The Relief Bus Report

These Things We Do...That Others May Live.



John Owens: A Testimony of God's Work in a Life

John was 49 years old, two days away from eviction, caught up in addiction and without food when he stopped at The Relief Bus. He had seen the bus on several previous occasions, parked near a spot he "used to pick up from" in the Bronx.



John and Lance prior to sharing a meal at Goodwill

On April 9th, 2011 he decided to stop because the sign on the side of the bus advertised help with the very things he needed: food, shelter, and help to get off drugs.

After being directed to talk with Outreach Leader Lance Farrell by a Relief Bus volunteer, John told Lance his story. Lance recommended that he consider going into a discipleship and rehab program at Newark's Goodwill Mission. Even though he was living in the Bronx, John was open to going to New Jersey, as he had hit rock bottom and was "tired of the way [he] was living." Lance met John on a Saturday, the next Monday John called Lance back, and by Tuesday he was in the program at Goodwill in Newark.

John said, "It was a wake up call when I met Lance." Just days before they met, he was still working. When he got paid, John decided to celebrate by getting high. He then found himself without any money or food.

This came after a long string of hard times for John. He served in the military and then floated around for years. More recently he was in Harlem and the Bronx- in and out of shelters and programs - praying "Lord help me because I can't help myself."

John had been in four different drug programs before Goodwill, but every one was missing the core element of discipleship, so he found a way to manipulate them.

Nowadays John gets up around 4:30am to prepare for his service in the Goodwill kitchen, where he serves every morning except his day off. He attends every weekday chapel services and discipleship classes.

Now that he is in a discipleship/rehab program at Goodwill John said, "I can actually see some growth in me now!" He knows what God has done in his life, that God's not done with him yet and has a plan for him. He said, "[God's] the one who is strengthening me and now I can face my past."



Goodwill Rescue Mission, Newark, NJ

Drew Toucher Runs for Relief in the NYC Marathon

On November 6, 2011, forty-five thousand runners will begin the arduous task of running 26.2 miles through the five boroughs of NYC. Out of the hundreds of thousands of applicants to the NYC Marathon, only about ten percent are chosen by lottery. Drew Toucher is blessed to be one of that number as he raises funds for The Relief Bus.



Drew is a youth pastor at Breakpoint Community Church in Hackettstown, NJ. Although

he hasn't been able to do any trial runs in NYC, Drew has seen the terrain he will be running through, but from a different perspective.

Over the past four years, Drew has been out to serve on The Relief Bus in Manhattan and the Bronx. His church joins us quarterly and recently booked a stay at the new Relief Base to serve for a weeklong missions trip.

It wasn't always his idea to run a marathon. In college Drew did track and field for four years, but as a sprinter. But at one point Drew listed the NYC Marathon on his bucket list, and now at age 34, he figures "It just doesn't get any easier to run these things."

Drew has been training since February for the marathon, attempting to rewire his sprinter body for the endurance needed for a marathon, running 10, 17, 20 miles.

Training hasn't been without its challenges, besides the obvious physical ones. Being a husband, father of two, and youth pastor while training makes it hard to balance time.

He continues to press on, knowing his family is excited for him, and that he is meeting a life goal. Drew is also creatively helping The Relief Bus and the people it serves.

Drew says his philosophy is, "Whatever I do, I try to leverage for His kingdom." In this case he is running 26.2 miles to raise funds so that another 18,000+ people on the streets can be helped by The Relief Bus next year. Even as he runs through some of the neighborhoods in which we serve, he is a part of helping people get on the path towards life transformation!



Drew & a friend in the Bronx

SPONSOR Drew for a flat amount or by the mile. Send a check or make a donation directly to The Relief Bus, with 'NYC Marathon' in the memo.

Please join our monthly support team today for \$25, \$50, \$100 or more so that The Relief Bus can continue for another 20 years, working to transform the communities we serve in. All gifts are tax-deductible. Make your check out to "The Relief Bus" and mail in or give online at www.reliefbus.org. Thanks for caring.

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